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AUTHOR Ogbu, John U.; Simons, Herbert D.
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ABSTRACT

A study examined differences between cultural models and educational strategies of three minority groups (African Americans, Chinese Americans, and Mexican American/Latino) to help explain the differences in school performance. Data also provide the first large scale test of J. Ogbu's theory of these school performance differences. Surveys were administered to 2,245 minority students in grades 5 through 12 in 16 schools in the Oakland school district, California. The theory proposes that differences among ethnic groups depend upon their terms of incorporation into the United States--"involuntary minorities" were incorporated against their will through slavery or conquest, while "voluntary minorities" chose to come to the United States. Pairwise comparisons were made between African Americans and Chinese Americans, and between Mexican Americans/Latinos and Chinese Americans. Results indicated that voluntary minorities considered education to be an important route to making it in society; were less concerned with prejudice and discrimination; were willing to conform to the dominant society's norms in order to succeed; did not fear that crossing cultural boundaries would harm their social identity; conformed to the expectations that schools have of good students. Results indicated that the educational model for the involuntary African American students was ambivalent--they reported ambivalent educational strategies which involved claims of parental support and high aspirations among both students and parents; exaggerated claims of school success; and reported less effort than the Chinese Americans. (Contains an illustration of Mexican descent population in the United States.) (RS)

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CULTURAL MODELS OF LITERACY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

CULTURAL MODELS OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT: A QUANTITATIVE TEST OF OGBU'S THEORY

John U. Ogbu
Herbert D. Simons

University of California at Berkeley

December, 1994

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Final Report
Cultural Models of School Achievement:
A Quantitative Test of Ogbu's Theory

John U. Ogbu
Herbert D. Simons
11/29/94

INTRODUCTION

The overall goal of the project is to help understand the school performance of minority students. More specifically it examines cultural models (folk model or theory) and educational strategies of three minority groups: African-Americans (AA), Chinese Americans (CA_ and Mexican-American/Latino (MA/L) in order to answer the question:

> **How do the differences between the groups' cultural models, educational orientations and strategies help explain the differences in school performance?**

Ogbu has provided the most comprehensive explanation of these school performance differences. The data from which his explanations have been developed have been mainly qualitative, more specifically ethnographic. The study reported here is the first large scale quantitative attempt to test his theory.

OGBU'S THEORY

The theory distinguishes between voluntary minorities who do well in school and involuntary minorities who do poorly. In essence the theory holds that voluntary and involuntary minorities differ in their view of schooling in terms of (a) its role in their striving to achieve upward social mobility or make it, (b) the extent to which the school and those who control it can be trusted to provide them with "the right education" and (c) how the process of schooling affects their minority cultural and language identity, depending upon <u>how</u> and <u>why</u> they came to this country. Their means of incorporation, their view of cultural differences, and treatment they received in this country all influence their beliefs about (a) the role of school credentials in striving to make it, (b) how they are treated in school and (c) crossing cultural and language boundaries or learning the dominant culture and language in the school context which in turn affect their school performance.

Voluntary minorities who came to the U. S. voluntarily because they believe that this move will lead to greater economic, political or social well-being, tend to believe (a) that they have a better chance of making it in the U. S. than "back home" or their place of origins, (b) that school credentials are more important for making it in the U. S. than "back home" where family status and favoritism are the criteria for upward social mobility, (c) that cultural and language differences, barriers to be overcome to are

achieve the goals of their emigration. They believe that they can cross cultural and language boundaries without losing their minority-group identity. (d) Finally, in their relationship with U. S. schools and those who control the schools they tend to be trusting or acquiescing. As a consequence of this belief and attitude voluntary minorities work hard to succeed in school and life and generally do succeed in both areas.

Involuntary minorities, on the other hand, who were incorporated into the U. S. society against their will through conquest or slavery, etc, rather than because they chose to come with expectations of a better future, and who have experienced a history of discrimination tend to see the situation differently. (a) Because they do not have another homeland or "back home" with which to compare, they compare their chances of making it with those of the dominant White group and generally conclude that they are worse off because of their minority status; (b) they believe that school credentials and hard work are necessary but not sufficient criteria for making it as minorities. They therefore tend to believe that it requires more than school credentials for them to get ahead in this country. (c) They have developed an oppositional identity to the dominant White American culture and language which influence their interpretation of the process of schooling. They tend to believe that crossing cultural and language boundaries in the school context will result in a loss of minority-group social identity. That is, they tend to believe that acquiring certain standard school behaviors, including the standard English, would result in a loss or displacement of cultural and language identity. (d) Because the relationship between involuntary minorities and the schools and White Americans who control the schools has historically been characterized by conflict and distrust, they distrust the schools and are skeptical of the ability of the schools to educate their children. As a result of all these, involuntary minorities are ambivalent about schooling, consciously or unconsciously resist adopting some school standard behaviors equated with White ways, and do not seem to work hard in school. Involuntary minorities do poorly in school when compared to the voluntary minorities.

THE SCHOOL SURVEY

The data for the analysis reported here come from a student survey which are a part of the data collected for the Minority Education Project (Ogbu 1994) which include in addition to the survey ethnographic interviews with parents, students and community leaders, observational descriptions in classroom, family and community, school records and relevant documents.

The student survey consists of 167 paper and pencil questions administered in school to 2245 minority students in grades 5 through 12 in 16 schools in Oakland school district, California. 1309 of the students were African Americans, 429 were Asian-Americans and 507 were Mexican-Americans/Latinos.

The questions were of two types. In one students were asked to choose one response from among a series of alternatives. For these questions the percentages responding add up to 100%. In the other type students were asked to check all the alternatives that apply.

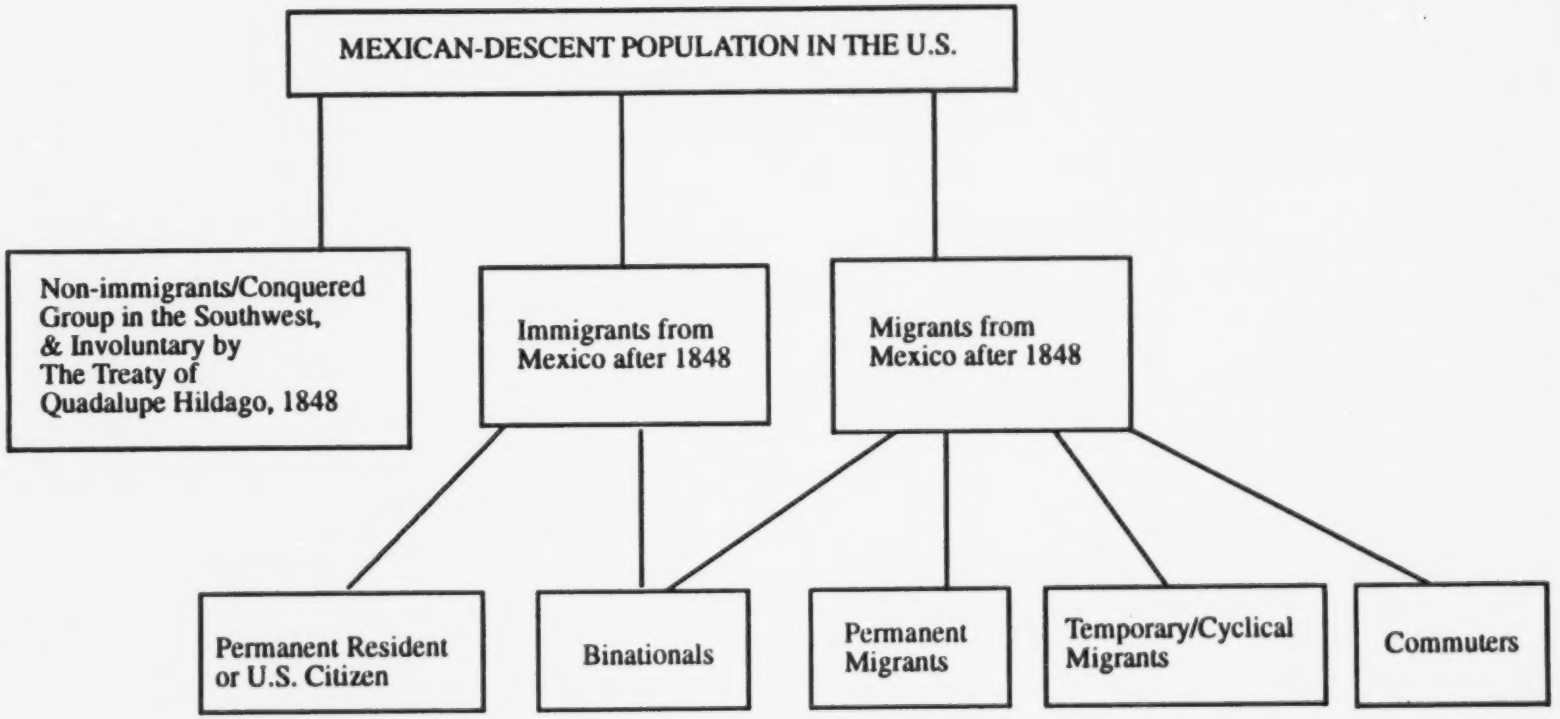
The number of alternatives ranged from 2 to 20. The percentages of these questions do not add up to 100 percent. Because of the great number of alternatives in some questions there may a tendency for the absolute percentages for given responses to be relatively low which makes the absolute percentages less important and difficult to interpret. In testing the theory it is the differences between groups, in particular voluntary versus involuntary, that is the most relevant and will be the focus of this report.

Analysis of Survey Data:

The theory proposes that there should be differences between ethnic groups, depending upon their terms of incorporation into this country. Involuntary minorities were incorporated against their will through slavery, conquest, etc. Voluntary minorities came to this country more or less voluntarily, usually for economic and less often for political reasons. One approximate way to classify students is to look at where their parents were born. If they were born outside this country they can be considered voluntary minorities. If they were born in this country they can be considered involuntary minorities. In this sample over 90% of the African Americans were born in this country and thus were classified as involuntary. Mexican-Americans/Latinos are classified as involuntary minorities because they were incorporated by conquest. However, if they recently emigrated from Mexico or some other Latin American country they would be considered voluntary. In the sample, 82.5% of the Mexican-American/Latino group's parents were born in Mexico and another 10% were foreign born but not in Mexico. Thus, in this study Mexican-Americans/Latinos were classified as voluntary. 95% of the Chinese American students' parents were not born in this country. They were classified as voluntary.

Although we have classified both Mexican-Americans/Latinos and Chinese as immigrants or voluntary minorities, the status of the two groups as immigrants is not the same. Upon a closer inspection the Mexican-Americans/Latinos are not the same type of immigrants as the Chinese. Specifically, not all "foreign-born" Mexican-American/Latino parents have come to live in the U. S. permanently and aspire to become U. S. citizens. Other sources of data indicate that the Mexican-American sample may include some descendants of an original conquered group, immigrants who have come to live in the U. S. permanently and immigrants who are binationals as well as seasonal and cyclical labor migrants (Baca 1994; Ogbu 1974). The within group differences are indicated in fig. 1 below. Given this situation the Mexican-American/Latino sample can be classified as semi-voluntary minority group. In analyzing the responses to questions we are looking for differences between voluntary (CA) and involuntary (AA) minorities, with the semi-voluntary group (MA/L) between the two.

The analysis focuses on two areas relevant to the theory. The first was student, parent and community view of succeeding or making it in life. The questions analyzed involved reasons for success or failure, the treatment of minorities and the role of


MEXICAN-DESCENT POPULATION IN THE U.S.
Non-immigrants/Conquered Group in the Southwest, & Involuntary by The Treaty of Quadalupe Hildago, 1848
Immigrants from Mexico after 1848
Migrants from Mexico after 1848
Permanent Resident or U.S. Citizen
Binationals
Permanent Migrants
Temporary/Cyclical Migrants
Commuters

Sources: Reynaldo R. Baca (1994), Toward an Understanding of the Success or Secession of First Generation Mexican Immigrant Students in High School. An unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley. John U. Ogbu (1974), The Next Generation: An Ethnography of Education in and Urban Neighborhood. New York: Academic Press.

racial prejudice, and education. The second area of interest involved attitudes toward school. We analyzed questions dealing with student and community attitudes towards school success, expected behavior, studying, and use of standard English. Within the second area of school we looked at oppositionality or resistance to doing well that showed up as stigmatization of good students.

The analysis discusses only a subset of questions and response to questions that were relevant to these issues. In reporting the results the percentages for closely related responses were combined in some questions for clarity of exposition. Response alternatives that were not relevant to the issues under discussion are not reported. Questions and responses were paraphrased in this report where the intent of the question was not compromised. The percentages were rounded off to the nearest whole percent. The questions will be discussed in terms of differences between African Americans, the involuntary minorities, and the Mexican-Americans/Latinos and Chinese Americans, the voluntary minorities. To test for these differences the Chi square Statistics was used to make pairwise comparisons between African Americans and Chinese Americans and between Mexican-Americans/Latinos and Chinese Americans. The P=.05 significant level is employed and is indicated by a single asterisk. It needs to be kept in mind that the survey was conducted on students only. Thus, response to questions asking about parents and community attitudes represent the students' responses.

FINDINGS

1. Perceptions of Minority Status:

The three groups differed in the extent to which they perceived themselves as involuntary or voluntary minorities. As expected, the majority of the Blacks, 81%, reported that their ancestors were brought to America as slaves or were there before White people arrived and took their land. We suspect that those reporting that their ancestors were here before White people arrived have partial Indian ancestry. 57% of the Chinese reported that their ancestors came to the U. S. voluntarily but 95% of them also reported that their parents were born outside the U. S. We have classified them as voluntary minorities. Mexican-American/Latinos fell between Blacks and Chinese, with 22% reporting that their ancestors came as immigrants and 15% that they were here before Anglos arrived or were conquered by Anglos. But as already noted, over 90% reported that their parents were born outside the U. S. in Mexico or elsewhere. We classified Mexican-Americans/Latinos as voluntary minorities.

2. Why The Minorities Came To or Are in the U. S.

Involuntary minorities differed from voluntary minorities in the reasons why they came to or why they are in the U. S.

Responding to the question about why they are in the U. S. voluntary minorities gave more instrumental reasons than the involuntary minorities, saying that they are in the U. S. because of opportunities for better jobs, education and to make more money to help their families back home and for political freedom (AA 42%*, MA/L 91%* and CA 75%).

3. Sociocutural Adaptaptions In The U. S.

(i). Instrumental:Opportunity Structure and Barriers to Making It.

Questions related to making it in life involve students' reports about what they and their parents and community believe about opportunities to succeed in this country, barriers to success, reasons for success or failure and the importance of education. Because of a history of discrimination and their response to it,the African Americans would be expected to have a less optimistic view of their chances for success. The barriers to success would be more salient for this group as well.

A number of questions dealt with opportunities and barriers to success in society. Involuntary and voluntary minorities differed in their perceptions of opportunity structure in the U. S.. The percentages of students who have heard their family and community say that the U. S.% is a country with great opportunities anyone which good school credentials and who works hard can succeed were higher among the immigrants than among the non-immigrants.(AA 56%*, MA/L 88% and CA 81%).The result for the family doesn't believe this and almost never heard parents say America is the land of opportunity was: AA 44%*, MA/L 10% and CA 16%. The African Americans thus show greater disbelief in America as the land of opportunity.

Unfair treatment in the form of racial prejudice and discrimination were cited as the reasons for lack of success with the African Americans citing it more often. When asked how they were being treated in America, African Americans cited unfair treatment more often than other two groups: AA 87%*, MA/L 63%, CA 54%. They also cited past prejudice more often: AA 31%*, MA/L 13% and CA 12%, as well as current prejudice: AA 48%*, MA/L 28% and CA 20%. Furthermore, they believe that their group experiences more prejudice than the other two groups: 24%*, MA/L 16% and CA 10%. A psychological barrier to success is minorities belief about Whites' view of their intelligence. When asked what White people think of their minority group, African Americans report in higher percentages that Whites seem them as not as smart as Whites: AA 82%*, MA/L 50%, and CA 14%. Conversely, Chinese Americans see themselves as smarter than Whites more often than the other two groups: AA 2%*, MA 8%* and CA 36%. Another question asked why their

group goes to school to get an eduction. African Americans in higher percentages said that they did it to show White people that they are smart: AA 18%*, MA 8% and CA 7%. The immigrants tended to see inability to speak English at all or to speak the standard English as a more serious barrier than racial discrimination and prejudice in their striving to get ahead.

Finally, when questioned about possible improvements in opportunity structure in the future, the voluntary minorities were the most optimistic while the involuntary minorities were the most pessimistic. The percentages of those who said that the future was good to excellent were AA 60%*, MA/L 65% and CA 91%. In contrast, the proportion of those reporting that the future was poor, hopeless or changeless was AA 40%*, MA/L 34% and CA 9%).

The responses to these questions support the theory by suggesting that the involuntary minority African Americans see greater barriers in terms of discrimination and prejudice in job opportunities and succeeding in general than the voluntary minority Chinese Americans. They also show a greater concern with their intellectual ability. They are very pessimistic about future improvements in opportunity structure. The Mexican Americans, with the exception of concern for their intelligence and future improvements, are closer to the Chinese Americans.

(ii). Symbolic/Cultural:Differences in Cultural and Language Frames of Reference

Voluntary and involuntary minorities differed in their perceptions of the differences between the languages they speak and the White dominant-group language, the standard English used at school. We first tried to ascertain how these minorities explain or understand the origins of the cultural and language differences. To this end they were asked what happened to their cultures and languages when their people first arrived in the U. S. The students could choose from four options: (a) White Americans **deprived them of or took away** their languages and cultures; (b) **allowed them** to keep their languages and cultures; (c) their ancestors **decided to keep** their languages and cultures; and (d) their ancestors **voluntarily gave up** their languages and cultures and adopted those of the Whites. The percentage reporting that White Americans **deprived them** of their languages and cultures was higher among the involuntary minorities: AA 51%*, MA/L 20% and CA 18%); conversely, the percentage of those reporting that **their ancestors decided to keep** their languages and cultures was higher among the voluntary minorities: AA 17%*, MA/L 45% and CA 44%. Thus, involuntary minorities believe that White Americans caused them to lose their original languages and cultures. They admitted, along with voluntary minorities that there are cultural and language differences between them and White Americans. The cultural differences between involuntary minorities and White Americans, according to the theory, arose after the minorities were incorporated into U. S. society and after they lost their original

languages and cultures. Then they created new cultures and languages or communication styles and developed a new cultural frame of reference usually in opposition to the White American culture and cultural frame of reference. A cultural or language frame of reference is an ideal way for a member of a group to behave or speak.

(iii). Relational:Degree of Trusting Relation with the Schools:

The theory posits that voluntary and involuntary minorities differ in their relationship with the schools. When asked to compare U. S. public schools with schools elsewhere voluntary minorities held a more positive view of the U. S. schools than involuntary minorities. The percentages of those reporting that U. S. schools are better were higher among voluntary minorities: AA 15%*, MA/L 22% and CA 27%). In responding to another part of the question, the percentage of those reporting that their parents did not trust U. S. school personnel and therefore must "watch out" for White teachers was higher among the involuntary minority African Americans than the other minorities: AA 20%, MA/L 14% and CA 13%. AS the theory predicted the involuntary African Americans have a lower and more distrustful opinion of the public schools.

4.Effects On Cultural Models of Schooling and Educational Strategies.

(i).Instrumental: Importance of Education in Overcoming Barriers.

All three groups see education and hard work as important in overcoming the barriers to success. When asked the reasons for success, getting a good education (AA 32%, MA/L 35% and CA 25%) and hard work (AA 26%, MA/L 31% and CA 26%) were cited about equally, with the Mexican Americans/Latinos showing statistically significant higher percentages on the education responses. On another question hard work was cited more often by Chinese Americans as responsible for a group's success: AA 27%, MA/L 32% and CA 47%. Poor education as a reason for not succeeding shows a similar response for all three groups: AA 27%, MA/L 25% and CA 26%. The role of education and hard work in overcoming discrimination is again seen as equally important for all three groups (AA 30%, MA/L 28% and CA 24%). However, on one question African Americans and Mexican Americans/Latinos show somewhat less faith in education and ability in improving changes for success (AA 53%, MA/L 58% and CA 65%), although the differences are not statistically significant. African Americans also cite laziness more often as an explanation for lack of success (AA 24%, MA/L 18% and CA 14%), suggesting some internalization of stereotype.

While reporting a belief in education as the route to overcoming barriers and succeeding in life, African Americans also report a greater faith in experience, common sense and street knowledge as necessary for survival than the other two groups (AA 46%, MA/L 24% and CA 28%). These percentages for the African Americans are about equal to their faith in education and the

knowledge gained from books for survival in the U. S. (AA 46%, MA/L 67% and CA 63%), while for other groups books and education play a larger role than experience, common sense and street knowledge. When asked in what area they want fame, the African Americans and Mexican Americans/Latinos choose sports and entertainment more often than the Chines Americans (AA 35%*, MA/L 28% and CA 15%).

In summary, all three groups see prejudice and discrimination as barriers to success and education and hard work as the key to overcoming these barriers. However, the African Americans see more barriers, and while they value education and hard work equally with the other groups, they at the same time place more value in alternative ways of knowing (experience, common sense and street knowledge) and favor sports and entertainment, which do not depend upon academic eduction as a way of making it.

The involuntary minorities, according to the theory, verbally emphasize eduction as a route to making but do not match their verbalization with effort because they do not see it as fruitful because of the job ceiling and discrimination. The results appear to fully support the theory because the African Americans do report in the same proportion as the voluntary minorities that they see education as playing an important role in overcoming the barriers to success that they face. However, more African Americans are concerned with these barriers. This suggests an ambivalence about education. They believe that education and hard work are important but at the same time they also equally believe in alternative routes to success.

(ii). Relational: Trust of Schools To Give Right Education

According to the theory the type of relationship between the minorities and the schools and Whites who control the latter affect their perceptions of schooling. Voluntary and involuntary minorities differ in their relations and perceptions. Voluntary minorities acquiesce more in their relationship and evaluate the schools more positively because some come to the U. S. to give their children the opportunity to get an "American education." While voluntary minorities are aware of prejudice, discrimination and bias in the schools, they teach their children to do their best and hold themselves accountable for their academic performance and other behaviors in school.

Involuntary minorities (a) did not come to the U. S. to give their children an "American education" and (b) have a long history of "collective struggle" with the schools over segregation and "inferior education". They tend to evaluate the schools more negatively. They believe that the schools do not understand their children and do not know how to relate to them and they doubt that the public schools can be trusted to provide their children with "the right education."

In answering a question about their relationship with the schools a higher proportion of voluntary minorities, as predicted by the theory, evaluated U. S. public schools more positively. On the other hand, as we have seen, a higher percentage of the

involuntary minorities say that they must "watch out" for White teachers or their substitute: AA 20%*, MA/L 13% and CA 12%. Thus, involuntary minorities are more distrustful of the schools than voluntary minorities. School records on student suspension show that involuntary minorities have excessively higher rates of suspension for violation of school rules than voluntary minorities: AA 84%, MA/L 7% and CA 2%. Most of the suspensions, particularly suspensions of involuntary minority males are for "defiance of authority".

(iii). Symbolic:Is Schooling Additive or Subtractive Process with Respect to cultural and language identity & Group Membership?

Do the minorities interpret the process of schooling as additive or subtractive with regard to cultural and language identity and minority-group membership? The theory predicts that voluntary minorities would interpret cultural and language differences as barriers to be overcome by learning the cultural practices and language (standard English) of the school (an additive process), whereas involuntary minorities would interpret the differences as markers of group identity and resist learning them (because it would be a subtractive process). They would consciously or unconsciously refuse to cross cultural and language boundaries, i.e. to behave or talk like White people ("acting White") in the school context. This opposition has origin in the history and community of involuntary minorities. This resistance to behaving in a manner that would enhance doing well in school would adversely affect students' academic performance.

(a).Schooling and Cultural Identity

Several questions dealt with this issue. Both voluntary and involuntary minorities consider school culture and language to be White mainstream culture and language. Both minorities say that they experience difficulties in school because of the cultural and language differences between them and the public schools. Asked to rank on a scale from 1 to 6 those differences that cause problems for them, language differences emerged on top of the lists of all three minority groups, with higher percentages for the voluntary minorities: AA 30%*, MA/L 40% and CA 44%. Next in rank order of their selections were: differences in manners or way of behaving, family life, attitude toward education, music and way of thinking.

Among both voluntary and involuntary minorities some interpreted the cultural differences as barriers to be overcome and some as markers of group identity to be maintained. About the same proportion of voluntary and involuntary minorities reported that their families and community feel that they should cross cultural boundaries in school in order to get a good education and eventually a good job when they finished school: 16%, MA/L 19% and CA 19%. A higher percentage but of the same proportion of each of the three minorities also reported that some people in their communities feel that it was not safe for them to cross cultural

boundaries in school because they might get hurt, forget who they are or turn against their own people: AA 27%, MA/L 42% and CA 20%. The small difference between voluntary and involuntary minorities indicates a weak support for the theory.

(b). Speaking standard English:Schooling and Language Identity

Speaking standard English can be seen as requiring the crossing of language boundaries and potentially diminishing students' social identity. Thus, the theory predicts that it might be resisted by African American students. In response to questions about speaking standard English, students in all three groups report that their parents and the community want them to learn standard English because it will increase school success and job opportunities: AA 66%, MA/L 47% and CA 59%. And the students appear to agree, as they report that they in fact do speak proper, correct , good, (i.e. standard English) (AA 78%, MA/L 71% & CA 68%). Thus, there is support for learning standard English even though it is considered to be "acting White" (AA 10%, MA/L 13% & CA 12%).

(c). School Success and Group Identity:

Students report in high and relatively equal percentages that they rarely hear parents say that education makes a person act White (AA 70%, MA/L 60% and CA 56%). Furthermore, they report that their close friends' response to their getting good grades is overwhelmingly positive (AA 48%, MA/L 44% and CA 46%). Few report being accused of "acting White" (AA 2%, MA/L 2% and CA 1%) or being teased or made fun of by their close friends (AA 4%, MA/L 6% and CA 2%). In addition, when asked in general about how students in general who get A's and B's are treated,accusing them of acting White is reported infrequently (AA 6%, MA/L 3% and CA 2%). However, African American and Mexican American students to a lesser degree who get A's and B's are stigmatized more than Chinese Americans by being called names (AA 14%, MA/L 10% and CA 8%), being laughed at or having joke made about them (AA 11%, MA/L 10% and CA 4%), are accused of trying to be the teachers' pet (AA 13%, MA/L 10% and CA 7%). Also, when asked why smart students hide their successful school performance, a similar pattern emerges. Acting like a White is less of an issue (AA 9%, MA/L 9% and CA 9%), than being called a "nerd", "wimp", "lame", etc. (AA 37%*, MA/L 34% and CA 17%), and fear of being rejected by other students (AA 24%*, MA/L 21%* and CA 13%).

The responses to these questions suggest that for African Americans to lesser degree Mexican Americans/Latinos in contrast to the Chinese Americans school success is stigmatized within the student school culture. While their close friends may not stigmatize their success presumably because their positive responses can be kept private, the public peer response to school success is negative.

On the issue of acting White, the percentages are low both for the parents and the students and there are few differences between groups. These results appear at first glance not to support the

theory. However, there are two explanations here. First, there may be a question of the label applied to students who succeed in school. The students and their families may not use the specific term "acting White" even though the behavior that is stigmatized has been called "acting White" in the literature (Fordham and Ogbu 1986). Second, the label "acting White" may refer more to life style and behavior than to school success. This latter explanation finds support in the responses to questions asking students to describe the characteristics of a student who is trying to act White. Responses such as gets good grades produces much lower percentages (AA 3%, MA/L 4% & CA 3%) than "White" behaviors such as talking proper (AA 10%, MA/L 13% & CA 12%), having mostly White friends (AA 12%, MA/L 10% & CA 13%) and looking down on other members of their group (AA 12%, MA/L 10% & CA 11%).

The theory predicted that voluntary and involuntary minorities would differ in their relationship with and perceptions of well-educated individuals in their groups. Well-educated individuals among involuntary minorities tend to disaffiliate with their community both physically and socially, whereas well-educated individuals among voluntary minorities may disaffiliate with their community physically but not socially. Students' responses to questions about well-educated individuals are not consistent. However, higher percentages of involuntary minorities reported that such individuals think they are better than other members of their group and want to move away from them: AA 30%*, MA/L 26% and CA 13%. Voluntary and involuntary minorities report in about equal proportion that well-educated minority individuals want to be like White people: AA 16%, MA/L 13% and CA 17%. On the other hand, a higher proportion of the voluntary minorities report that such individuals want to behave like White people: AA 33%*, MA/L 22% and CA 67%. In another question asked only of African Americans and Mexican-Americans/Latinos, well-educated and successful minorities received a more positive evaluation: 68% of the African and Americans and 71% of the Mexican-Americans/Latinos said that such individuals are smart, a credit to their race, want to help their people and are proud of their heritage.

5. Educational Orientation: Attitudes Toward Schooling

(i). Parent and Community Support for School:

Consistent with the questions discussed above, students report about equally in all three groups that their parents and other adults in their community communicate to them that school is important and that they want them to do well. When students are asked if their parents have explained to them why it is important to go to school, a very high proportion answered in the affirmative (AA 92%, MA/L 92% and CA 94%). Parents and community people have high grade expectations for the students. A large proportion want them to get A's and B's. However, a higher proportion of Chinese American students report that their parents want them to get A's

s(AA 40%, MA/L 46% & CA 67%). Adults in the community share this view that the students report (AA 48%, MA/L 47% and CA 59%). Parents' reaction to students dropping out of school is negative in all three groups. They would be angry (AA 22%, MA/L 19% & CA 19%), and disappointed (AA 26%, MA/L 30% and CA 28%). The communities view of good students is positive as well. They are proud of them (AA 27%, MA/L 21% and CA 37%) and expect them to do well in life (AA 31%, MA/L 30% & CA 36%). Parents show their interest, the students report, by inquiring about school performance almost everyday or at least once a week (AA 77%, MA/L 68% & CA 53%). The African Americans and Mexican Americans/Latinos are higher here than the Chinese Americans. The lower percentage of the Chinese Americans may reflect the fact that they do so well in school that their parents don't need to remind them. It is just understood in the immigrant tradition that they will do the work school requires of them. The higher percentage of the African Americans and Mexican Americans/Latinos may reflect inflated report. Evidence from ethnographic interviews and participant observation would suggest that the parents of these groups do not ask about school work to the same proportion reported by the students.

Nevertheless, the parents' support of the school expectation is also positive. Parents feel that the students should conform to teachers' behavioral expectations (AA 30%*, MA/L 14%, CA 21%). Learning standard English can be seen as a threat to social identity. However, students in all three groups equally report that their parents and the community want them to learn standard English because it will increase their school success (AA 27%, MA/L 29% and CA 30%) and job opportunities (AA 22%, MA 16% and CA 21%).

Students report that the parents and the community in all three groups have very positive attitudes toward school. The Chinese American parents and community have higher grade expectations than the other two groups. The Mexican-American parents also have higher grade expectations, although they have low educational aspirations for their children.

(ii). Students:

(a). School Attitudes

According to the Ogbu theory the voluntary minorities (a) see education as a route to making it; (b) have less conflict and acquiesce more in their relationship with the schools; and (c) interpret cultural and language differences they encounter at school as barriers to be overcome. As a consequence they work hard and do well in school. The involuntary minorities on the other hand, (a) are not as positive about education as the route to making it because of the job ceiling and their history of discrimination, although perception of the job ceiling is not the only factor. (b) They see schools as White institutions which have discriminated against them and cannot be trusted. (c) Attitudes, behaviors and language required to do well in school are seen as White and requiring the minorities to cross cultural boundaries with a potential loss of ethnic identity. All these factors

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discourage students from adopting academic success-enhancing attitudes and behaviors and working hard to succeed in school. And resistance to "acting white" and putting forth the effort to succeed.

(b).Aspiration and Effort Or Educational Strategies:

As far as educational aspirations are concerned African Americans and Asian Chinese Americans have high aspirations with high percentages reporting that they want to go to a four-year college or beyond (AA 71%, MA/L 35% and CA 68%). The Mexican Americans/Latinos report lower college aspirations.

The issue of how much effort is expended in trying to succeed can be looked at by examining questions dealing with school and class attendance, paying attention in class, doing class work, developing and maintaining good study habits, doing homework, investing time on schoolwork, avoiding distractions and so on. Ogbu calls these primary educational strategies. Students who cannot behave this way because of social or peer pressures resort to what he calls secondary strategies. The latter include emulation of Whites (i.e., behaving like White students, camouflaging (e.g, acting like jesters, getting intensely involved in peer approved activities,); alternation strategy (i.e., behaving one way at school and another in the community); changing schools to avoid peer pressures; etc. According to Ogbu theory, secondary strategies shield students from peer pressures and other distracting forces which might prevent them from using the primary strategies.

Voluntary and involuntary minorities do not differ in self-reported frequency of school attendance but in class attendance. The proportion of students who skip school at least once a week was: AA 7%, MA/L 14%* and CA 8%; and the proportion who cut classes at least once a week was: AA 12%*, MA/L 8% and CA 6%. Mexican-Americans/Latinos are higher in the proportion of those who skip school. School records show that voluntary minorities have both highest school attendance in 1989-90: AA 73%, MA/L 76% and CA 90% at the senior high; AA 82%, MA/L 78% and CA 94% at the junior high. They also have the highest class attendance, according to records in 1989-90: AA 73%, MA/L 76% and CA 91%.

Involuntary minorities reported much more often that they avoided math and sciences and other courses needed to go to a four-year college. The proportion of students who report that members of their group do not avoid taking math and science courses is higher for voluntary minorities: AA 10%, MA/L 10% and CA 61%*). When asked how often they do homework, higher percentages of Chinese Americans report they study nearly everyday (AA 30%, MA/L 25% & CA 43%). Higher percentages of Chinese Americans report they do their homework five or six days or every day (AA 52%, MA/L 52% and CA 79%). Chinese Americans also report in higher percentages that they never cut classes (AA 64%, MA/L 58% & CA 80%) and lower percentage that they cut classes only one or two times a week (AA 29%, MA/L 33% and CA 14%). The minorities do not differ in the reported amount of effort they invest in doing their schoolwork. The

proportion of those reporting that they work hard is about the same in all three groups: AA 73%, MA/L 74% and CA 85%. Yet, involuntary minorities reported more often that they play games with the teacher or "kiss up to" the teacher for grades instead of doing their schoolwork to earn the grades. The proportion of those reporting that they know 6 to 10 or more members of their group who play games for grades was: AA 45%*, MA/L 27% and CA 18%; conversely, voluntary minorities reported in highest percentage not knowing any members of their group who played games for grades: AA 19%, MA/L 34% and CA 54%*). As far as grades are concerned, Chinese Americans report A's and B's more often (AA 40%, MA/L 40% and CA 55%). These responses suggest that Chinese Americans as the theory predicts put more effort in school and as a consequence do better than African Americans. Mexican-Americans/Latinos are similar to the African Americans in this respect and less like voluntary minorities.

THE MATCH BETWEEN THE QUANTITATIVE SURVEY AND OGBU'S THEORY

In evaluating the degree to which the data support the theory we need to look at the differences among the three minority groups as well as the absolute percentages. As far as the differences between the three groups, the involuntary minority African Americans as the theory predicts do show some differences when compared to the other two groups, particularly Chinese Americans. In other areas differences are not found where the theory appears to predict differences.

1. Sensitivity to Barriers to Making It

According to the theory African Americans because of a past history of discrimination are more sensitive to the barriers to succeeding in life. These barriers include job ceiling and prejudice and discrimination. The data provided consistent support for this explanation. On questions of prejudice and unfair treatment the African American students report that their parents and community believe that the barrier are higher for them than for Chinese Americans. The Mexican American/Latinos are similar to the Chinese on most questions but report that they see more barriers on several questions. The data conform to the Ogbu theory in this area.

2. Importance of Education and Hard Working Overcoming Barriers:

The theory claims that both voluntary and involuntary minorities see education as a major route to success in society, but that involuntary minorities will see educational institutions as hostile and as requiring them to cross cultural and language boundaries. As a consequence, involuntary minorities are opposed to or ambivalent about using eduction as a route to making it. They will be more likely to favor alternate routes to making it such as sports, entertainment, hustling, etc. The data provide some support for the theory. All three groups see education and hard work equally as the means to overcome discrimination, as providing a

route to success and lack of it as a reason or failure. The Mexican Americans/Latinos report a greater faith in education in one question. However, the African Americans report a greater belief in alternative sources of knowledge, i.e.1 common sense, experience and street knowledge, as compare to book knowledge than the Mexican Americans/Latinos and Chinese Americans. They also report more willingness to pursue alternate routes such as sports and entertainment and less interest in the professions. These results support an ambivalence or conflicting attitudes toward education explanation rather than outright opposition.

3. Parents and Community Attitude Toward School:

Parents and community appear to have uniformly positive attitude toward school for all three groups with few differences among groups. They explain to their children why it is important to go to school; inquire often about school; would show disappointment and anger if student drops out of school and are proud of students who do well in school. Chinese Americans appear to have higher expectations in that higher percentages want their children to get A's and B's than the other two groups. With the exception of the last question, the parents and community of the African Americans, contrary to the theory, support the school as much as the voluntary minorities but they show more mistrust or opposition to the schools.

4. Student Attitude Toward School

(i). Aspiration, Effort and Grades:

Two groups have high aspirations. The Mexican Americans/Latinos have much lower aspirations. However, higher percentages of Chinese Americans report more school effort manifested by frequent studying and doing homework and infrequent cutting of classes and school. Chinese Americans also report higher percentages receiving A's and B's. These results support the theory in showing more effort on the part of voluntary minorities. The Mexican American/Latinos behave like involuntary minorities on this issue. As noted earlier, Mexican-Americans/Latinos are not "immigrants" in the same way as the Chinese. Hence, in some things they do not behave like voluntary minorities.

(ii). Crossing Cultural Boundaries and Acting White:

According to the theory, doing well in school is seen by the involuntary minorities as crossing cultural boundaries and there is resistance to putting effort into school. The results show some support for the theory. While students in all three groups report that parents and their close friends don't stigmatize school achievement, the African Americans report in higher percentages that doing well in school is stigmatized. However, there is some evidence that "acting White" is more associated with style and behavior than doing well in school.

(iii). Standard English

Standard English is associated with crossing cultural boundaries. While talking proper is seen as "acting White" it does not appear to be stigmatized. Students report equally that their parents want them to speak standard English and realize it is important for school and job success. They also report in high percentages that they speak standard English. The lack of differences between the voluntary and involuntary minorities in self reports do not support the theory. However, the self-reports may not reflect what actually happens as will be explained later.

Overall the theory is supported by differences between voluntary and involuntary minorities in sensitivity to prejudice and discrimination, alternative ways of making it and belief in non-school knowledge, school effort and stigmatization of school success. The lack of differences in aspirations, belief in education as a route to making it and support for standard English appear discrepant with the theory. Also the high percentages of students who report speaking standard English, getting good grades, studying and doing homework particularly for African Americans do not support the theory. The apparent lack of support for the theory will be explained later when we discuss the discrepancy between verbalization and actual behavior.

5. Resolving Discrepancies:

(i). Involuntary Minorities:

One discrepancy between the theory and the data is the high percentages of positive responses particularly among African Americans for speaking Standard English, and reported grades. We have evidence from school records, for example, that the percentages receiving A;s and B's was (AA 10%, MA/L 12.5% and CA 58%), which is considerably lower than the student reported grades of (AA 40%, MA/L 40% and CA 78%). The extreme high percentages of students who report speaking standard English (AA 78%, MA/L 71% & CA 68%) also seems to conflict with our observations of the students in the classroom and general lack of standard English use among these minorities. In the ethnographic interviews "acting White" for African Americans often meant speaking standard English. The same for Mexican-Americans/Latinos who termed it "acting Anglo." They said that speaking like White or Anglo made them angry. The symbols of acting Anglo were language and dress; they way of talking and dressing as manifested by the "wannabes" or people who were embarrassed about being Mexican or people who thought that they were better than other Mexican-American/Latinos. This contradictory evidence between self-reports and observed behaviors strongly suggest that the students in this survey tended to give socially acceptable answers which would please their parents and teachers. Also the fact that the survey was administered in school may have raised concern about the confidentiality of their answers. This would have contributed to a desire not to give answers that their teachers would disapprove of

related to homework, studying, knowledge of standard English, etc. However, in spite of this social acceptability phenomenon, the voluntary minorities still reported more effort.

The desire to give answers that are expected by parents and teachers is related to another general tendency for the involuntary minorities. There appears to be a discrepancy between what they say and what they do. They may say that they want to do the things that lead to school success, such as speak standard English, but their behavior is not always consistent with their verbalization. Even in ethnographic interviews African American students often described quite well the right types of things a student should do in order to get good grades: paying attention in class, doing classwork, doing what the teachers say, doing homework, studying a lot, and so on. But much of their classroom and outside classroom behaviors did not conform to such an ideal. For the voluntary minorities there seem to be a closer relationship between what they say and what they do. Our classroom and home observations suggested that the Chinese American students behaved more in a manner that conformed to school and classroom required behaviors and attitudes.

Both these explanations are a reflection of an ambivalence for involuntary minorities about the importance of eduction and the need to work hard to succeed in school. On the one hand there is the belief that education is an important rout to success in society. On the other hand there is the conflicting belief that education won't lead to success in life because of discrimination and job ceiling and that success in school means crossing cultural boundaries which is harmful to social identity. The response to the survey reflects this ambivalence. While reporting that the community and their parents profess a belief in eduction as a route to making it,the African Americans at the same time put their faith in alternative sources of knowledge and routes to success. They also perceive more prejudice and discrimination than the voluntary minorities. They report that their parents as do the student have high educational aspirations and are positive about success in school. But at the same time they report that students that do well are stigmatized by other students.

This ambivalence about school success may not be wholly conscious. And in fact, the Ogbu theory recognizes this possibility. Thus, involuntary minorities may consciously or <u>unconsciously</u> interpret school learning as a displacement process detrimental to their social identity (Ogbu 1994). Ambivalence about succeeding in school plays a major role in accounting for poor performance especially when it is played out in the substandard schools of inner cities which many African Americans are confined to.

The responses to several questions suggest that for the African Americans the issue of intelligence is a sensitive issue and presents a greater problem than for the other groups. More of them believe that Whites do not think that they are as smart as the Whites are. They also report that they go to school to show Whites they are smart.(AA 18%*, MA/L 9% & CA 7%). This suggests that there

may be an internalization for African Americans of society's negative stereotype of their intellectual ability. The belief that the schools do not expect them to succeed can lead to reluctance to working hard in school even though they verbalize a desire to do well and even though they verbalize that doing well in school requires working hard. These conflicting beliefs contribute to ambivalence about school. For Chinese Americans and Mexican Americans/Latinos concern about lack of intellectual ability is much less of a problem.

Overall the survey responses generally support the theory for he involuntary minorities. However, the apparent discrepancy discussed above suggest that ambivalence about school success needs to play a larger role in the theory.

(ii).Voluntary Minorities

The responses of Chinese Americans to the survey conform pretty consistently to the theory's predictions. The voluntary minorities, particularly the Chinese Americans do not exhibit ambivalence and do not appear to not conflicted about putting their efforts into succeeding in school. The result is school success.

The Mexican Americans/Latinos in most cases respond like voluntary minorities as expected from their classification discussed above as voluntary minorities. However, there are some discrepant findings in which they respond like involuntary minorities. They seem to be more sensitive to prejudice and discrimination and report less studying, homework, etc. and more stigmatization of doing well in school. Their school performance is closer to that of involuntary minorities as well. The paradoxical response of the Mexican-American/Latino sample can be explained in terms of their reclassification as semi-voluntary minorities, discussed in the early part of this report. Some members of this group are involuntary minorities tracing their ancestry to the conquest of 1848; some are immigrants in the same sense as the Chinese; some are binationals who may reside in the U. S. more or less permanently but are still oriented toward Mexico; others are migrants and include seasonal, cyclical migrants as well as commuters. Because the binationals and migrants have not come to the U. S. intending to live here permanently and seek citizenship, they are ambivalent about the way they bring up their children. It is not clear whether they are bringing up their children, including orienting them toward education, to prepare them for life in Mexico or in the U. S. In other words, Mexican-American/Latino children do not get the clear message that Chinese children get from their parents, that their education is to prepare them to compete and live in the U. S. Hence, some Mexican-American/Latino children are unsure about the meaning and goals of their eduction.(Baca 1994; Ogbu 1974).

CONCLUSION

The responses to the survey suggest that for the voluntary minorities in this study the cultural model of schooling involves a belief that education is an important route to making it in

society. They are less concerned with prejudice and discrimination as barriers to making it. They are willing to conform to the dominant society's norms in order to succeed and do not fear that crossing cultural boundaries will harm their social identity. Their educational strategies involve conforming to the expectations that schools have of good students. They have high aspirations, work hard in and out of school and conform to teachers' behavioral expectations and as a result they succeed. This model and the strategies that it produces fits the Chinese Americans more than the Mexican Americans/Latinos as discussed above.

The educational model for the involuntary African American students in this study can best be characterized as ambivalent. On the one hand they report their parents and community believe in education as the route to making it in society. At the same time they are sensitive to prejudice and discrimination and believe equally in non-educational sources of knowledge. This produces ambivalent educational strategies which involve claims of parental support and high aspirations among both students and parents and exaggerated claims of school success. At the same time they report less effort than the Chinese Americans. Further, they report that school success is stigmatized by students in general not by their close friends. This suggests that they are ambivalent about crossing cultural boundaries which they perceive school success to require, for fear of displacing their social identity. These contradictions in their beliefs and stated behavior may in the context of substandard schools where they are the object of low expectations make it difficult to provide the effort necessary for school success.

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